



Cliffe Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121529
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281034
Inspection dates 3 April 2006 to 4 April 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Roger Gill CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Cliffe
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 6NN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01757 638 426
Number on roll	84	Fax number	01757 638 426
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Paul Hopkins
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Cook

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	3 April 2006 - 4 April 2006	281034

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school in a relatively advantaged rural area near Selby. It originated from a philanthropic bequest in the 18th century and is now voluntarily controlled by the trustees. The vast majority of children are of white British heritage; relatively few have a learning difficulty, but the number rises considerably in some year groups. Children live near to school. The movement in and out of the area is very high at times.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Cliffe is an outstanding school, which modestly judges its effectiveness to be good. It knows itself very well, but acknowledges that its test scores in 2005 were not as good as they had been for the previous three years. Actually, these results represented strong progress for children, many of whom joined the school after the usual time of entry and found learning difficult. So while attainment dropped temporarily achievement was good. The school has maintained its very high reputation locally since its last inspection and is well placed to improve even further. Children progress rapidly in the outstanding provision of the Foundation Stage. They then develop and widen this excellent achievement across the full range of subjects in Years 1 to 6. Learning flourishes owing to good and often exemplary teaching and a very stimulating curriculum. Children's personal development is of a high quality because the care they receive is so supportive. They develop a mature perspective on their work, school and life in general. Parents are overwhelmingly in favour of the school. One even wrote, light heartedly but with feeling, that, 'it is a pity the children cannot stay until Year 11'. Leadership and management are excellent. The small team of staff, led with vision and drive by the headteacher, multi-task in a seamless way to provide children with a great education. The school knows, correctly, that it could provide even more challenge for some very capable children throughout the school. Despite the high costs involved, the school provides outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that children with special gifts and talents, in any subject, are challenged fully.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children's achievement is first rate. They start school with typical skills for their age, but this can vary greatly from year to year. Notwithstanding, they make rapid progress and many exceed the goals for their learning by the end of Reception. Good progress continues in Year 1 and 2; children achieve well in basic skills and other subjects. By the end of Year 6, children's achievement is always good and often outstanding. Most children reach the challenging targets set for them, but test results are often overly influenced by small groups that find learning difficult. Standards are invariably above average across the board. Some painting and textiles work in art and design, produced by the oldest children, is visually stunning. The rich curriculum, children's love of learning and energetic and ambitious teaching all combine to produce swift progress. This applies to all children irrespective of their capabilities. The school realises correctly that there is always more scope for children with particular gifts or talents to do better. For example, some very bright mathematicians lap up everything they are given and need even more demanding work. The school is already working on a plan to tackle this and the general achievement of the most able.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

One of the Year 6 children said about the school, 'it has a very happy atmosphere, I always feel safe when I am inside it.' Others agree and rightly applaud the variety of things to do, the responsibilities afforded them and the way they are prepared for secondary school and the world of work. All this produces children who are polite, sensitive, academically inquisitive and very well behaved. Their admiration of the school is reflected in the very high attendance. They feel very well cared for and in return care for each other in many ways. The school council is very effective in seeking and acting on children's views and older children have a plethora of duties including acting as health and safety consultants to the governors. Willingness to contribute goes beyond the school. For example, fund raising is enthusiastically undertaken and the response to the Christmas present appeal for less fortunate children in other countries is massive. Being in an all white community, they learn as much as possible about other cultures and can speak with confidence about third world issues. Children's strong spiritual development is typified by the way that they ask searching questions in assemblies and collective worship.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are exceptional: always good and often outstanding. The teaching of Reception and Year 1 children together is often excellent. Both sets of children learn swiftly in a setting that smoothly combines play with more formal work. The best teaching gets immediate results. In a Year 4 writing lesson children produced bold, imaginative and complex sentences which were very well punctuated because teaching was so lively and involving. Similarly, the work designed to help children who find work difficult in the Year 2/3 class is apt and effective. The teaching of fractions, decimals and percentages in Year 5/6 was so productive that even children who found learning difficult were inspired to come up with the correct answers. Occasionally, as the school acknowledges, there could be even more demanding work for the most able children. A powerful and constant thread in teaching and learning are the first-hand experiences children enjoy in many subjects. For example, children in Year 5/6 recalled a memorable history lesson in which they cleaned their painting shirts in a Victorian wash tub. The school has excellent systems for assessing children's learning, which produce targets that are precisely linked to what children need to do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The range of things for children to do is impressive, including the much improved curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT). The list of physical activities is seemingly endless: from tag-rugby to circus skills. The curriculum appeals

to children of all ages. Making fruit crumble in the Reception and Year 1 class, in pursuit of science and design technology, fascinates children. Visits to places of interest are most beneficial. Those studying life in the Second World War visited Eden Camp and were inspired to make realistic models of Anderson shelters. Outstanding connections between subjects bring learning to life. A study of Kenya, by the oldest children, involved geography, history, art, music and English. The clay masks produced with tribal designs were very eye catching. The excellent programme for personal development covers health, safety and other vital issues such as race equality. There are many engaging activities outside lessons such as gymnastics, dance and art.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Children's best interests always come first in this school. It provides excellent care which enables learners to enjoy all that they do. The time and effort given to supporting children who have transferred from other schools, for example, is immense. Child protection procedures are in place and working well. Risk assessments are completed scrupulously, by staff, governors and children, ensuring a safe environment. Parents are totally positive about the way the school deals with their children, including those that find learning hard. Children feel secure with teachers: they know that someone is on hand to lend them a listening ear. This underpins the superb relationships that exist throughout the school. Academic guidance for children is very effective. They set themselves targets to reach, which are often influenced by comments in teachers' marking. Records of children's learning, in all subjects, are comprehensive and used well to pinpoint areas for improvement in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school justly deserves its local authority's accolade of being, 'highly effective'. It works collaboratively with all interested parties who, in their turn, are loyal and industrious. An unswerving pursuit of high achievement receives the overwhelming support of parents, governors and trustees. Many are in awe of the dedication shown by the headteacher and her staff. Governors support superbly and work very hard to ensure that the school continues to be successful. Improvements in ICT since the last inspection have been substantial causing standards to rise sharply. This is typical of the school's unstinting capacity for development.

The headteacher and her staff work together harmoniously. Despite most team members being responsible for several subjects, they have a strong impact on children's achievement and standards. They get an amazing amount done in order to plan, assess and develop the curriculum and the quality of children's learning. In this way leadership and management contributes directly to children's outstanding academic achievement and personal development. Meticulous records of progress in all subjects are analysed to identify areas for development, which are translated successfully into school

improvement plans. Thorough evaluations describe the results of the teams' work, but the school is slightly too modest in its self-assessment.

The school's standing in the community, and the influence of leadership and management on children's personal development, was apparent when the local village post masters attended an assembly in honour of their retirement. The children gave them a great send off demonstrating a high level of politeness, good humour and thoughtfulness.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so helpful and friendly. I would like to share with you what I thought.

- I think that you attend an outstanding school.
- I was really impressed with your behaviour, kindness and positive attitudes.
- Some of your work, like the Lowry mobiles and quilting, was breathtaking.
- I was touched by the way you said farewell to the village post masters.
- I enjoyed the way that the Year 5 and 6 children told me all about the school.
- The enthusiasm of your headteacher, teachers, assistants and everyone else who works at the school is great.

I know everyone wants to do even better and I have suggested something that I think will help.

- Your teachers need to make sure that all children with a special flair, in any subject, are given every opportunity to enjoy even more demanding challenges.